

USAID/KENYA DISABILITY PLAN OF ACTION

INTRODUCTION

USAID/Kenya is committed to the inclusion of Kenyan people with physical and cognitive disabilities in the implementation of our programs. USAID/K programming is accessible to and utilized by persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities are also beneficiaries of our program.

USAID/Kenya remains a leading donor in Kenya in democracy and governance, microenterprise development and population and health sectors. USAID coordinates closely with all the major donors in Kenya. These donors often look to the United States' effort for coordination and leadership in policy dialogue and resource allocation. USAID will share information on the disabled on a regular basis with these donors. Most of these donors are also working closely with indigenous and international NGOs and this approach will complement USAID's disability action plan.

USAID/K Strategy and Activities that Benefit Persons with Disability.

USAID 1996-2000 program focuses on "broad-based sustainable economic growth in Kenya contributing to crisis prevention in the Horn of Africa". Our subgoal is "increased food security in Kenya." This five year strategy focuses on the immediate and long-term needs of Kenyan people, including people with disabilities.

Our strategic objective (SO) 1.0 focuses on creating effective demand for sustainable political, constitutional and legal reform. Under this SO, the Mission works with NGO partners to encourage peaceful political liberalization in Kenya, i.e., a relaxation of government controls and its monopoly on political power. This should encourage greater political expression and association for persons with disabilities. For example, over the last three years, we have supported indigenous organizations such as National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK), Public Law Institute (PLI) and Center for Law and Research International (CLARION) which have employed disabled persons to coordinate their advocacy programs. These are powerful personalities who have advocated for the rights and programs for persons with disability.

USAID has also funded the umbrella NGO Council where one of the board members is a person with disability and who has used this position to influence disability policy in Kenya. He has championed the interests and views of the disabled people particularly at it relates to the on-going constitutional reform process in Kenya. Over the years, USAID has been instrumental in supporting and sponsoring persons with disability to participate in a variety of our training programs. These include legislative drafting which is done annually. Last year the Mission sent one blind person to this training.

The main focus of SO 2.0 is increasing economic growth and alleviating poverty through microenterprise development, relief and development assistance, agriculture development support and disaster management. In Kenya, the proportion of population living in abject poverty has

continued to rise over the recent past. USAID has some on-going activities aimed at reversing this trend. For example, reports from our partners show that many disabled people are beneficiaries of business loans through the Mission's microenterprise programs. These loans are aimed at increasing incomes of the beneficiaries, including employment generation. An increasing number of farmers with physical disability are using the irrigation pump developed by Approtech, a local NGO funded by USAID to promote appropriate technology under the non-financial services component of our Micro-PED project.

USAID/K's third strategic objective focuses on decreasing fertility and the risk of HIV/AIDS transmission in Kenya. We assist the Government of Kenya (GOK) and Kenyan non-governmental organizations to make safe, effective and voluntary reproductive health services available to those who wish to utilize them. Our programs include research, policy advocacy, service delivery support, technical assistance and information to improve not only family planning and HIV/AIDS services, but to also support child survival services, including immunization campaigns and malaria control efforts. Disabled Kenyans are clients who require these services just like anyone else, and who the Mission will assist to ensure that these services are easily accessible to them.

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USAID/K will, to the extent possible, ensure our strategic objectives and other activities, incorporates priorities and values of persons with disabilities and groups pursuing their interests. Under this plan of action, USAID plans to accomplish the following:

- *Encourage activities related to democracy and human rights initiatives.* SO 1.0 will attempt to institutionalize efforts towards advocacy on fundamental rights of persons with disability and other bundle of rights necessary for protecting the disabled.
- *Support training for persons with disabilities.* USAID will make it possible for disabled persons to compete favorably for such training programs as legislative drafting, democracy scholarships, e.t.c., as well as widening the scope of such opportunities. We will revise our internal training requirements and introduce a special requirement that at least one disabled person must benefit from all the DG SO training.
- *Advocacy for interests of persons with disability.* USAID will encourage DG funded programs to carry out advocacy work for people with disability. We will encourage our NGO partners to ensure that the interests of the disabled are included in the on-going constitutional review.
- *Utilization of disabled persons' advocacy groups as partners in program design.* SO 3.0 has identified many national level NGOs -- including those which represent the disabled -- to work with us on new project initiatives. Persons living with

HIV/AIDS and local AIDS NGOs, among others, were included in a recent stakeholders meeting which had critical input into a new, five year HIV/AIDS effort. We will continue to involve organizations such as the Kenya National Association of the Deaf and the Kenya Society of the Physically Handicapped in similar efforts.

- *Policy formation and advocacy.* SO 3.0 has provided major technical assistance to the preparation of national policy papers on population and on HIV/AIDS. These new documents spell out the Kenya Government's priorities in these areas. Significantly, they address the needs and roles of disabled persons, which should be emphasized in future programs. SO 3.0 will continue to ensure that all policy and advocacy activities address the special needs of the disabled.
- *Project implementation specific to assist the disabled and prevent disabilities.* The SO 3.0 team believes that all of its programs should address the health needs of disabled persons in Kenya. However, there are specific activities that can be targeted towards people with disabilities. For example, SO 3.0 has supported (through USAID/W) ASHA grants to Kikuyu Hospital which enabled it to build a orthopedic rehabilitation center, the only one of its kind in the region. This unit performs surgery and produces prosthetic devices.

USAID, in collaboration with UNICEF and WHO, is assisting the Kenya Expanded Program on Immunization to put in place a surveillance system that will track cases of acute flaccid paralysis so that follow-up medical care can be carried out, either to prevent disabilities due to polio or manage such disabilities, if they occur.

- *Construction of buildings "friendly" to disabled persons.* Unlike developed countries, Kenya has few buildings that accommodate wheelchair bound persons. This often restricts their access to hospital and clinic facilities. Under SO 3.0, we provide limited support in the construction of new clinics; however, a USAID local currency grant enabled the Family Planning Association of Kenya to build a new headquarters building and state of the art reproductive health clinic that was designed to specifically accommodate disabled persons. As we continue to work with our donor partners, including the Government of Japan, to improve quality of care, we will encourage them to ensure that there are wheelchair ramps and other facilities to improve the access of services to disabled clients.

THE NAIROBI BOMB BLAST

The August 7, 1998, a bomb explosion outside the American Embassy in Nairobi resulted in the loss of many lives, injuries and sufferings to thousands, and destruction of buildings, businesses and infrastructure. About 600 people were hospitalized immediately following the blast while over 6,000 were treated for various injuries. The explosion resulted in a 213 deaths. Many of the

victims who survived the blast suffered either eye, limb, facial or spinal injuries. In order to meet the special needs of these people, USAID/K developed a new special objective. Under this special objective, the Mission will work closely with Kenya Society for the Blind, the Kenya Society for the Physically Handicapped, Operation Recovery, mental health institutions and the Kenya National Association of the Deaf to address special concerns of people who were permanently affected physically. Specifically, we offer psychological counseling, reconstructive surgery, and follow-up treatment services to the victims. Additionally, SO 2.0 will work with the bomb blast victims to assist them to actively participate in gainful economic activities while SO 3.0 will continue to identify specific opportunities to help these newly disabled persons cope with their new situation in life and remain active members of society.